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ABSTRACT

The Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (WECCP) is a grassroots effort providing leadership and guidance to state agencies and local organizations in facilitating the development and implementation of a plan to permit every child and family in Wisconsin access to a blended, comprehensive delivery system for high quality early childhood education and care. This report outlines WECCP activities and collaborative accomplishments, identifies deficiencies in the current service delivery system, and highlights opportunities for action. Following introductory remarks, the report presents a rationale for focusing attention on the quality of early childhood education and care, emphasizing research supporting collaboration and public investment in children. A narrative recounting events in one day of a child's life illustrates the confusing nature of the current system for early childhood education and care. The report next describes early childhood settings and their confused funding streams, providing an overview of several major programs related to child care, Head Start, public education, and children with special needs. Also presented is the vision of the WECCP for forging public policy providing infrastructure for a comprehensive early childhood system. This vision addresses four areas: (1) public policy, structure, and family economics; (2) equity, access, and families as consumers; (3) quality services for all children; and (4) professional development. The report then details achievements of the WECCP and their partners, which include success-building efforts in five major areas: community development, professional development, leadership development, service delivery, and network development. Opportunities for promoting the WECCP vision are then delineated for government, early childhood associations, communities, existing early childhood programs, business and civic groups, higher education, and parents or family members. The report's two appendices contain 12 references and the endorsing partners of the WECCP. (KB)

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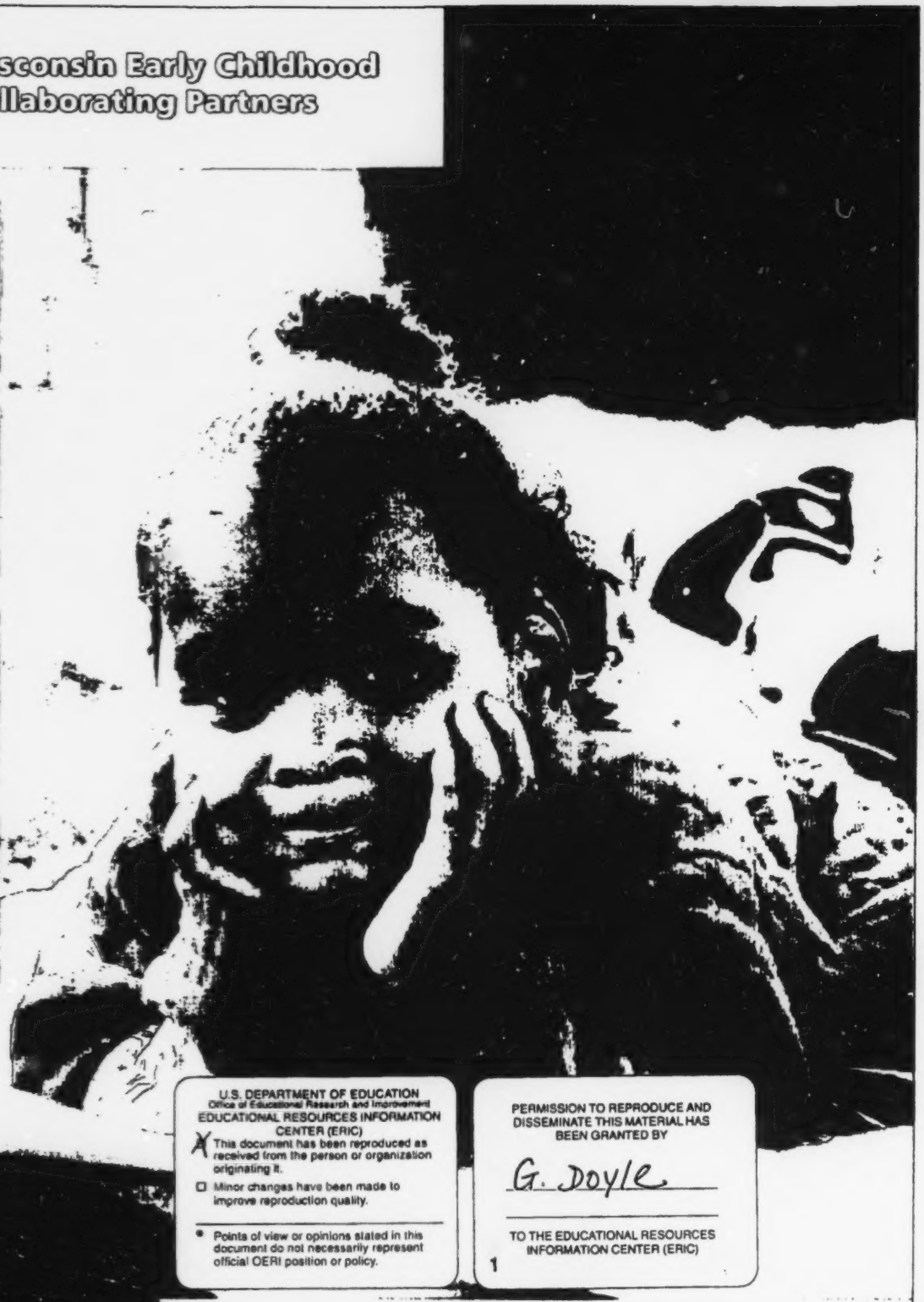

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Working To Transform Early Childhood Education & Care

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Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners

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SCOTT McCALLUM
Governor
State of Wisconsin

Dear Friends:

As Governor of the great State of Wisconsin I am proud of our history of investing in the education and care of our children. As you may know, the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners has provided leadership and guidance to state agencies and local organizations and it is my pleasure as Governor to endorse their work. Together, with the State Departments of Health and Family Services, Public Instruction and Workforce Development we are able to achieve the vision "every child and family in Wisconsin will have access to a blended system of high quality, comprehensive early childhood education and care.'

My office has worked with the National Governors' Association to develop a plan of action to increase the public and political will for early childhood education and care in this state. This plan of action will result in the following:

- Improved family access to blended quality early education and care services;
- Development of a statewide infrastructure to guide and enhance state policies through the creation of the Children's Cabinet and advisory committees;
- Promotion of a seamless education system to prepare staff that care and educate young children;
- Increased number of high quality and accredited early learning programs;
- Recognition of the importance of early childhood education and care by state government, business leaders, civic groups, and all citizens of the State of Wisconsin.

I believe the path to achieve our goals is to efficiently utilize our precious resources and to wisely invest in our children. "Think Big; Start Small: Invest early in a child's future" is the theme of our statewide public awareness campaign. By working together across systems at the state, county, and local level we can continue to build on our strong base of programs for young children in Wisconsin and insure that all children have opportunities to participate in quality programs leading to success in school and life.

This report from the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners provides a snapshot of some of our Wisconsin success stories and our plans for the future. Achievement of the proposed action plans requires all of us working together. I look forward to providing the leadership for Wisconsin and encourage you to be a leader in this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Scott McCallum

Scott McCallum
Governor

Our Goal

To develop and implement a plan that permits every child and family in Wisconsin access to a blended system of high quality comprehensive early childhood education and care.

Philosophy

The design and transformation from the current separate early childhood education and care systems to a quality, comprehensive early childhood system are a shared responsibility among families, providers, the public sector, and the private sector. A quality early childhood system offers community support to all families in their roles as parents, supports the economic opportunities and self-sufficiency of families, and offers quality services to children. This comprehensive system offers families hope for the future as it encompasses all of the services and institutions families rely on when raising their children. The positive outcomes of this comprehensive system are important for society as they support the development of productive citizens. The infrastructure necessary to support the system includes access to a sufficient range of comprehensive developmental services with well-compensated skilled staff at prices families can afford.

"Working to Transform Early Childhood Education & Care"

I

Introduction: Stepping Up To The Challenge

Wheels are turning in the world of early childhood education and care. While observant parents, preschool teachers, and others dedicated to early childhood have long recognized the importance of the earliest years of life, only recently has their insight taken hold among a wider public audience, including policy makers. Amidst ongoing societal change and an outpouring of scientific evidence related to the critical nature of early childhood, national attention is finally — slowly but surely — swinging to focus on the children at our feet. A window of opportunity is open for all individuals who work to support young children and their families.

Efforts such as The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study, The Reynolds/Temple Study and The Carolina Abecedarian Project, along with significant findings in brain development research, have elevated early childhood education and care to new point of public scrutiny. More people now than at any other time in America's history are paying attention to the manner in which we care for our youngest members of society. Unfortunately, and with alarming clarity, the spotlight reveals that as a nation we under-serve our children. It also serves as a challenge and provides an important springboard from which to make changes in the way we support families, provide programming, and structure funding related to early childhood education and care.

Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (WECCP) is stepping up to the challenge. WECCP is a grass roots effort representing over 44 public and private agencies of all sizes. Together they are dedicated to facilitating the development and implementation of a plan that will permit every child and family in our state access to a blended, comprehensive delivery system for high quality early childhood education and care. The responsibility for such an effort — a transformation from the currently separate early childhood education and care systems toward the design of a comprehensive, quality early childhood system — is a shared responsibility among families, providers, the public sector, and the private sector. The transformation is critical for society and warrants attention at the highest possible level.

This document serves to outline WECCP activities and collaborative accomplishments to date. It also lays the groundwork for future efforts by shedding light on deficiencies in the existent service delivery system and highlighting opportunities for transformative action. It speaks to all individuals, public and private agencies, and associations invested in Wisconsin's young children and their families.

II

Why Focus Attention On Quality Early Childhood Education & Care?

On some level, we have always recognized that the earliest years of life are critical to the later development of a child's intelligence, personality, social values, and behaviors. As of late, however, this powerful relationship between early experience and outcomes for later life has been the focus of significant scientific inquiry in the area of brain research. Study after study supports that sustained experiences children have in families, with caregivers, and teachers during their earliest years matter.[1] They make a difference in preparing children for success in school, community, and the workforce. They affect relationships with peers and adults, and lay the groundwork for the child's future and the future of society.

Children Are Born "Wired To Learn"

From the time of conception through the early years, developmental learning speeds along at a rate faster than any experienced later in life. Infants and young children make huge cognitive and linguistic gains, and dramatic progress in their emotional, social, regulatory, and moral capacities.[2] This period of amazing growth — early childhood — is as vulnerable as it is dramatic. A child's overall development can be seriously compromised by trauma, loss, early personal rejection, or exclusion from a nurturing environment. Children are born "wired to learn". Their early learning experiences, or lack thereof, determine the pathway, sturdy or fragile, they will follow in later years.

Environments and Relationships Matter

Virtually every aspect of human development is molded by the experiences and environments encountered by children during their earliest years. Genetic and environmental influences work together as sources for both growth and risk.[3] Children are most likely to reach their potential when they have a close, dependable relationship with at least one parent or other adult. To be truly beneficial to the child, this relationship must consistently provide love, nurturance, security, responsive interaction, and encouragement for exploration. For optimal development of early learning behaviors, the relationship must be one in which the adult is a reader, reads often to the child, and engages him or her in active conversation. Early relationships must also protect the child from exposure to mental or physical health problems, family or neighborhood violence, and other destabilizing factors. The child's early development is therefore inextricably linked to the health, well-being, and education of parents and caregivers.

Society Is Changing

In recent years, social and economic change in America has made it increasingly difficult for parents to balance work and family lives. In addition, children today are more likely to be poor than they were 25 years ago, which increases their chances of being exposed to circumstances that compromise healthy development. This is compounded by the fact that parental work responsibilities often relegate children to care settings of questionable quality. As a nation, we must move beyond the point of assigning blame to parents who falter in their struggle to meet their children's needs alone. We must step up to the challenge of designing better support structures for children, their families, and the community as a whole.

Policy & Practice Is Fragmented

While early childhood policies and practices have made great strides in recent years, both remain highly fragmented. Service points of entry are confusing and gaps in service prevent seamless integration of programming. Many areas of the population remain under-served and transition between early childhood services and formal schooling is problematic.

Our children's earliest years still receive less attention from policy makers and lower levels of public investment than any other stage in their journey toward adulthood. As a result, Americans dig deep into their pockets annually to fund policies that are remedial rather than preventative in nature: welfare, special education, criminal justice, etc.

Brain Research Supports Collaboration

Important support for quality early childhood education and care comes from national and international research on human brain development. Numerous studies highlight the differential manner in which positive and negative environments impact brain cell development during early childhood. An impoverished environment leads to decreased size and number of cells while an enriched environment leads to increased cell weight. Brain cell development in early childhood is critical because it determines to a large extent how children learn, grow, develop, and mature into adulthood. From Neurons To Neighborhoods[4] (a joint publication by the Board on Children, Youth, and Families of the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine) reviewed the developmental interplay between neural circuitry of the brain, social relationships, and cultural influence during early childhood. Their landmark recommendations included a call for the long-term, collaborative investment of government, professional organizations, private philanthropy, and voluntary associations.

Research Supports Public Investment

In 1998 the Rand Corporation released their study, Investing in Our Children: What We Know and Don't Know About The Costs and Benefits of Early Childhood Interventions. The study reviewed nine diverse, model early childhood programs to assess the value of public investment in early childhood education and care.[5] Researchers reviewed data comparing developmental indicators, educational achievement, economic well-being and the health of children involved, with the same measures for matched control groups. Results

"Early environments and nurturing relationships are essential."

indicated conclusively that early childhood intervention programs can yield positive, measurable results.

The Rand study also pointed to the expenditure of public money to improve the lives of young children as a good investment. Children enrolled early in quality education and care programs do better as adults, thereby reducing burden on the state in terms of welfare, criminal justice, and related costs. Programs targeted at disadvantaged children, in particular, provide significant benefits for participating children and their families. Gains include: improvements in educational process and outcomes for the child; increased economic self-sufficiency, initially for the parent and later for the child; reduced levels of criminal activity; improvements in health-related indicators, such as child abuse, maternal reproductive health, and maternal substance abuse.[6]

A more recent study by researchers Arthur Reynolds of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Judy Temple of Northern Illinois University, again asked the question, "Do the benefits of early intervention exceed the costs?" The Reynolds study is of particular significance because it moved the focus of inquiry beyond model early childhood programs to programs administered through public schools and human service agencies.[7] Their cost-benefit analysis of the federally funded Chicago Child-Parent Center Program (which serves children from low-income families in Chicago's inner city) examined five categories of benefits: reduced need for grade retention and special education; reduced juvenile and adult crime and arrests; averted costs to crime victims; reduced child welfare expenditures; and greater earning potential due to educational advancement. The findings were remarkable; participation in an established early childhood intervention for low-income children was associated with better educational and social outcomes up to age 20. Of particular poignancy, the Reynolds/Temple study highlighted the necessity of providing intervention programs early — preschool participants showed higher long-term gains than school-age participants — and on a prolonged basis.

These studies are but a few among the many that currently underscore the pressing need to integrate scientific research with intervention strategies that work. It is time for a new national dialogue focused on rethinking the meaning of shared responsibility for children and strategic investment in their future.[8]

III

A Day in the Life of a Child

The confusing nature of our current system for early childhood education and care — variance in program type, eligibility criteria, and funding streams — presents a serious obstacle to many families in need of services. In Wisconsin, 45% of children under age 5 with employed mothers are shuttled between two or more regular care programs each week.[9] To improve and ensure their safety and well-being, we must move to a system that offers programs which a) eliminate frequent transitions from one location to another; b) provide developmentally appropriate programs that allow for quiet/rest time during the day; c) offer children access to consistent staff; d) ensure an environment that is comfortable and "home like;" and e) implement one curriculum and lesson plan for the day so that children are not required to "switch gears" repeatedly.

Joey's Mom is a single parent who has recently re-entered the workforce. In addition to Joey, she has two other children and is participating in the W-2 program. She just began a new job at McDonalds, where she makes a little over minimum wage. Her opening shift begins at 6:30 a.m.

At 5:45 a.m. on a typical morning, Joey's Mom wakes him up, dresses him and his siblings, and hustles them along a two block stretch to the home of an acquaintance she made recently while working at McDonalds. She hesitates as she prepares to leave the children, hoping against hope that they will be safe with this individual whom she hardly knows. After a hug and kiss, she rushes off to catch her bus.

Joey's siblings, who are older than him, leave for school before he does and he plays quietly while waiting for his Head Start bus to pick him up. The bus arrives at 7:45 a.m. and Joey watches out the window as he rides throughout surrounding neighborhoods to pick up other children. After 45 minutes on the bus, he arrives at Head Start where he eats breakfast and then participates in the program.

Joey has developmental delays that qualify him for early childhood special education. After lunch at Head Start, Joey waits for the Early Childhood bus to pick him up. When the school district bus arrives, Joey waves goodbye to his morning friends and teachers, and climbs aboard with his next set of friends for the ride to the elementary school where the early childhood special education classroom is located.

Awake since before 6:00 a.m., Joey arrives at his program tired and cranky. His Early Childhood teacher struggles to work on Joey's IEP goals with him, yet he soon begins to act out. The afternoon is difficult.

After Early Childhood, Joey climbs on yet another bus for the ride to his Grandmother's house. While she enjoys having him, she works third shift and usually tries to catch up on sleep in the afternoon. Joey's grandmother typically wakes up to greet him, then plops him in front of the T.V. and goes back to bed until his siblings arrive.

The day ends when Joey's mother arrives at the grandmother's house, where the family is reunited and catches a ride home in Grandma's car. Joey barely makes it through dinner before falling fast asleep at the table. His mother, who has spent less than a half hour with him during the day, gently undresses him and carries him to bed.

IV

Early Childhood Settings & Funding

In the United States, 58% of mothers with children under one year of age are currently in the work force or looking for work. The number rises to 64% for mothers of preschoolers and to 78% for mothers of school-age children.[10] For a majority of these working parents, child care is not a choice but an economic necessity. With approximately 80% of all American children enrolled in at least one type of care program by the time they reach age six, the availability of quality early childhood programs for all children is an undeniable national necessity.

Here in Wisconsin, children learn and grow in a wide variety of programs: family and center child care, school-based 4- and 5-year-old kindergarten, early intervention and special education for children with disabilities, Head Start, Even Start Family Literacy, Family Resource Centers and other parent education programs, as well as health and social services. Regardless of the program, eligibility for children depends on one or more individual or interrelated factors: age, economic status of the parent, developmental status of the child, parent awareness of available services, and/or the family's ability to pay.

In general, quality early childhood programs cost more than most parents can afford. Funding to facilitate access to quality for all children and their families is thus of upmost importance. Substantial federal and state subsidy streams do exist to offer support. On a national level, state and local expenditures for preschool programs serving low-income families currently exceed $15 billion* annually and are expected to rise.[11] In practice, however, these funding streams are confusing and complicated for even the most informed government participant to understand. For parents seeking services, the experience is nothing less than chaotic. To combat the problem, it is becoming increasingly common for a single location to host several programs with different goals and funding sources. Such a "one-stop" approach is highly desirable, enabling programs to make their services more accessible and convenient to families with young children.

An overview of existent funding to several of the primary programs serving children and their families may be found on the following pages. The complicated nature of the funding streams is evident. A variety of federal and state departments administer the programs, each with their own administrative rules and differing eligibility criteria. Our work is clearly cut out for us: continue to design and build collaborative bridges to better serve the children and families of Wisconsin.

* This figure reflects services to low-income families only.
Total expenditures for programs serving all children is substantially higher.

Summary of Select Program Funding Streams

The chart on the left provides a general overview of several major programs directly serving young children, birth to age 6, and their families. The figures provided are estimated based on 1999-2000 data. They do not include all of the programs that service children and their families.

The collection of accurate comparison data presents a problem: there is no consistent method of data collection used across all programs. In some cases, the data has been estimated as young children may not be distinguished from a larger total data source. Additionally, the data may represent point-in-time counts and not annual enrollment. The local funding source column does not include the local match required by many programs or the contributions from parents and consumers.

A breakdown of funding by selected programs may be found on subsequent pages, the flow of which clearly highlights the confusing nature of the current system. In order for local communities to maximize available funding, it is vital for policy makers to understand the existent flow and recognize gaps and deficiencies within the system.

Summary Chart Key

* Estimated Data (young children may not always be distinguished from a larger total data source).

** Point-in-time counts (not annual enrollment).

*** Does not include the local match required by many programs.

**** Does not include contributions from parents and consumers.

Note: These figures should not be used to determine cost per child or to make other specific financial statements or comparisons. They are provided only as a snap shot of the amounts and sources of major funding sources serving children to age 6.

Funding Summary Chart • 1999 Data

Program	# of children served in a 12-month period	Funding Source: Federal	Funding Source: State	Funding Source: Local
Birth to 3 Early Intervention program	9,732	$6 million	$5 million	$11 million
Head Start and Early Head Start	15,157	$84 million	$7 million	***
Special Education for children ages 3-5	14,380**	$9.6 million	$13.7 million*	$24.6 million*
4- and 5-year-old kindergarten	70,038	$24 million*	$315 million*	$101 million*
SAGE and class size reduction (Kindergarten data only)	7,683	$2.4 million*	$4.6 million*	***
Even Start Family Literacy	2,000	$2 million		***
Wisconsin Shares child day care	44,873*	$99 million*	$13 million*	****
TOTALS	**164,863 (duplicate count)**	**$227 million**	**$358.3 million**	**$136.6 million**
USDA: school, child care, and milk program	61,000*	$37 million*	$40,000*	***
TOTALS	**224,517**	**$264 million**	**$398.3 million**	**$136.6 million**

Funding Streams for Child Care

Recognized by *Working Woman* magazine as a leader in the provision and regulation of child care, Wisconsin currently has approximately 9,980 regulated child care programs. This number includes approximately 2,270 licensed group programs, 2,710 licensed family child care homes, and 5,000 certified family child care homes. Group child care centers and family child care homes are licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services/Bureau of Regulation and Licensing. Family child care programs are certified by the local county. Regulated child care programs are required to maintain group sizes and staffing ratios that fall within state and county requirements.

Regulated child care programs may receive federal and/or state funding for participation in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program, and/or Wisconsin Shares Child Care (Department of Workforce Development).

1999 Child Care Food Program Statistics

- Eligibility: regulated group center or family child care programs, public or private non-profit organizations or for-profit organizations compensated by Title XX
- Ages Served: Birth to 12
- Number Served: Family providers = 3,901, group centers = 746
- Funding Source: USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program ($26 million)

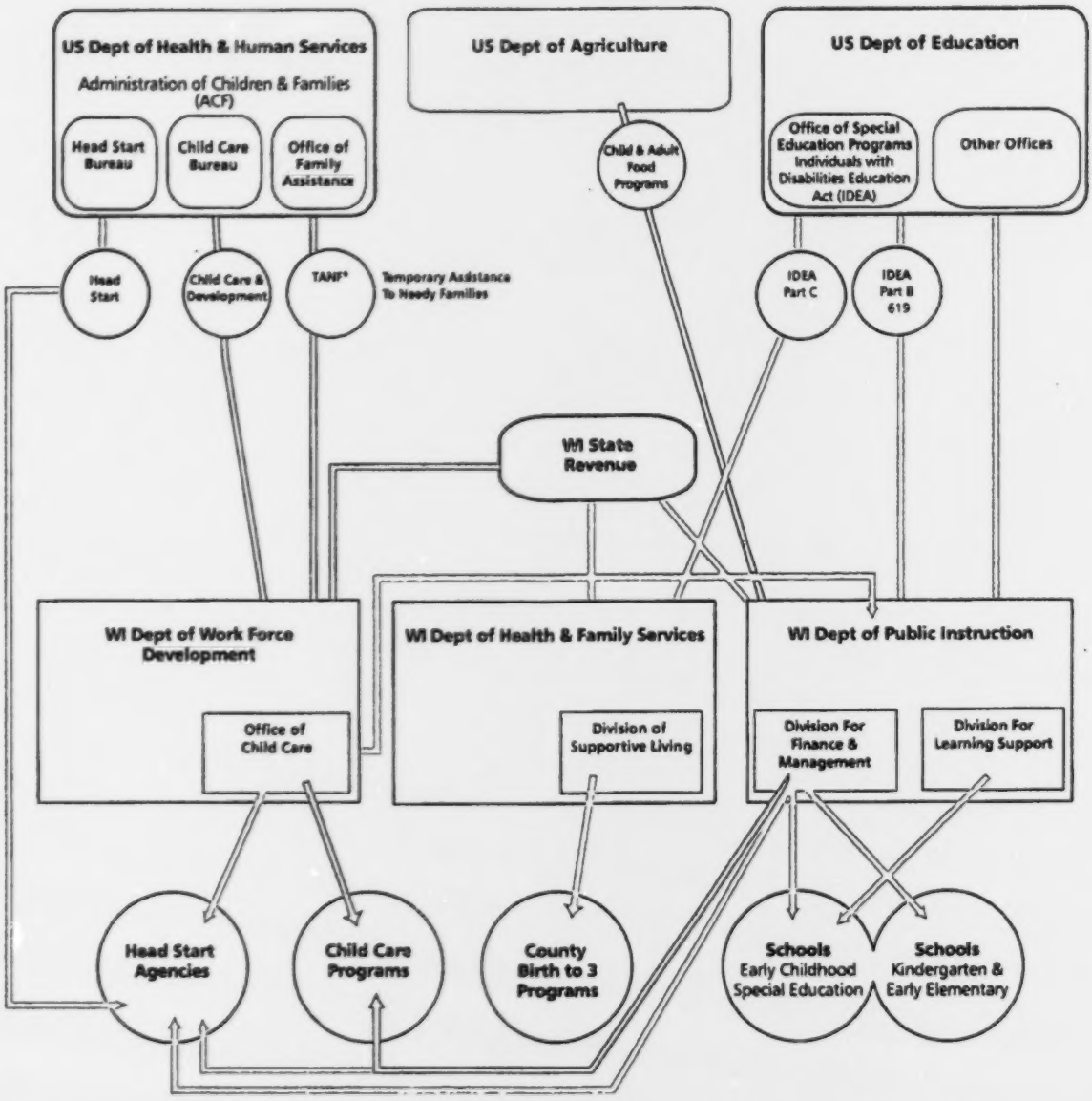
Wisconsin Shares Program Statistics (estimated using 1999 - 2000 data):

- Eligibility: families must meet both financial and non-financial eligibility requirements in order to be determined eligible for Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy
- Ages Served: children under age 13, or children under age 19 who have special needs
- Number/percent served during a 12-month period: 44,873

Wisconsin Shares Funding (estimated using 1999 - 2000 data)*:

- From Federal Sources: $99 million
- From State Sources: $13 million

Funding For Child Care*


US Dept of Health & Human Services
Administration of Children & Families (ACF)
Head Start Bureau
Child Care Bureau
Office of Family Assistance
US Dept of Agriculture
Child & Adult Food Programs
US Dept of Education
Office of Special Education Programs Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
Other Offices
Head Start
Child Care & Development
TANF*
Temporary Assistance To Needy Families
IDEA Part C
IDEA Part B 619
WI State Revenue
WI Dept of Work Force Development
Office of Child Care
WI Dept of Health & Family Services
Division of Supportive Living
WI Dept of Public Instruction
Division For Finance & Management
Division For Learning Support
Head Start Agencies
Child Care Programs
County Birth to 3 Programs
Schools Early Childhood Special Education
Schools Kindergarten & Early Elementary

* *It is important to note that this chart does not account for the considerable amount of money expended through parent contributions or private pay. In Wisconsin, 48% of working families with children under age 13 pay an average of $279 per month for child care. For these families, child care expenses consume on average 9% of family earnings, the second largest expense after rent or mortgage.*[12]

Funding Streams for Head Start

There are currently 42 Head Start agencies in Wisconsin, including seven tribal programs and one migrant program. Head Start programs provide comprehensive services to low-income children and families including education, disabilities, health, mental health, nutrition, community, and social services. Early Head Start provides services for low-income pregnant women and families with infants and toddlers. Parent partnership is a cornerstone of both programs. There are currently 12 Early Head Start programs in Wisconsin, including one tribal and one migrant program.

Through Head Start, children from 3-5 years of age may receive services in their own homes, in classrooms, in schools, in child care centers or, most recently, in family child care settings. Federal Head Start funds are provided primarily to serve children through part-day and part-year programs. Head Start agencies include public schools, private not-for-profit organizations, Cooperative Educational Service Agencies, tribal governments, and Community Action Programs.

<u>Eligibility and Ages Served</u>

- Head Start Eligibility: 100% poverty (10% may be over income).
- Ages Served by Early Head Start: birth to 3 years and pregnant women
- Ages Served by Head Start: 3-5 years.

<u>Number/Percent of Children Served (1999-2000 Program Year)</u>

- Total Funded Enrollment: 15,377
- ACYF Funded: 14,248 (92.66%)
- Non-ACYF Funded: 1,129 (7.34%)

<u>Enrollment by Age Composition</u>

- Age 0-1: 575
- Age 1: 249
- Age 2: 380
- Age 3: 6,477
- Age 4: 8,376
- 5 years and older: 546

<u>Total Funding (estimated using 1999-2000 data)</u>:

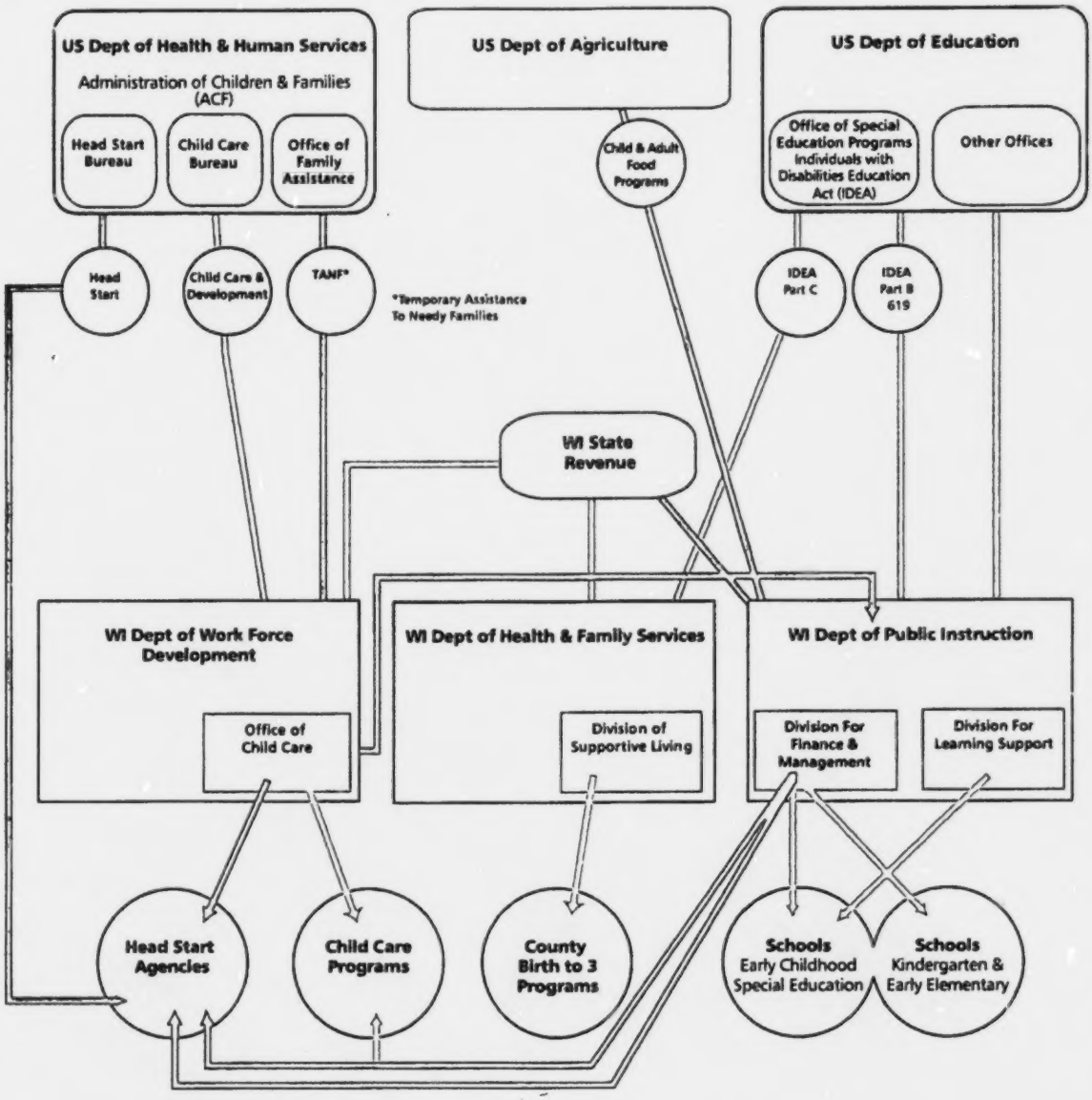
- From Federal Sources: $84 million
- From State Sources (administered by DPI): $7 million

In Wisconsin, the majority of Head Start funding comes directly from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families.

The state also funds local Head Start programs through a combination of general purpose revenues and TANF dollars. State funding is administered by the Department of Public Instruction.

In some cases, Head Start programs provide full-day services for children whose parents are employed. Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy often funds this extension of Head Start Programs.

Funding For Head Start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US Dept of Agriculture
Child & Adult Food Programs
US Dept of Education
Office of Special Education Programs Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
Other Offices
Head Start
Child Care & Development
TANF*
*Temporary Assistance To Needy Families
IDEA Part C
IDEA Part B 619
WI State Revenue
WI Dept of Work Force Development
Office of Child Care
WI Dept of Health & Family Services
Division of Supportive Living
WI Dept of Public Instruction
Division For Finance & Management
Division For Learning Support
Head Start Agencies
Child Care Programs
County Birth to 3 Programs
Schools Early Childhood Special Education
Schools Kindergarten & Early Elementary

Funding Streams for Public Schools

Wisconsin's public schools serve young children through 4- and 5-year-old kindergarten programs as well as early elementary programs, grades 1-3. Approximately one-third of Wisconsin's 426 school districts now offer part-day, 4-year-old kindergarten programs. School districts are mandated to offer part- and/or full-day, 5-year-old kindergarten programs. Approximately 80% of all 5-year-old kindergarten programs last a full school day. Early elementary programs are available in all Wisconsin districts and operate for full school days (typically 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.). Public school programs do not have eligibility requirements and are available to all children in the community.

These school programs have typically operated in public school buildings. Recently, however, a few school districts have initiated community-based approaches through partnerships that bring 4- and 5-year-old kindergarten programs to child care or Head Start center settings. In these instances, teachers may still have separate kindergarten classrooms, may team-teach in a blended program, or teach through other arrangements. In addition to 4- and 5-year-old kindergarten, schools with low-income populations may receive targeted funding for:

- **Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE):** State funding targeted to improve academic achievement of primary grade pupils through implementation of 15-to-1 student/teacher ratio classes, expanded school/family/community collaboration, enhanced professional development, and implementation of rigorous curriculum.

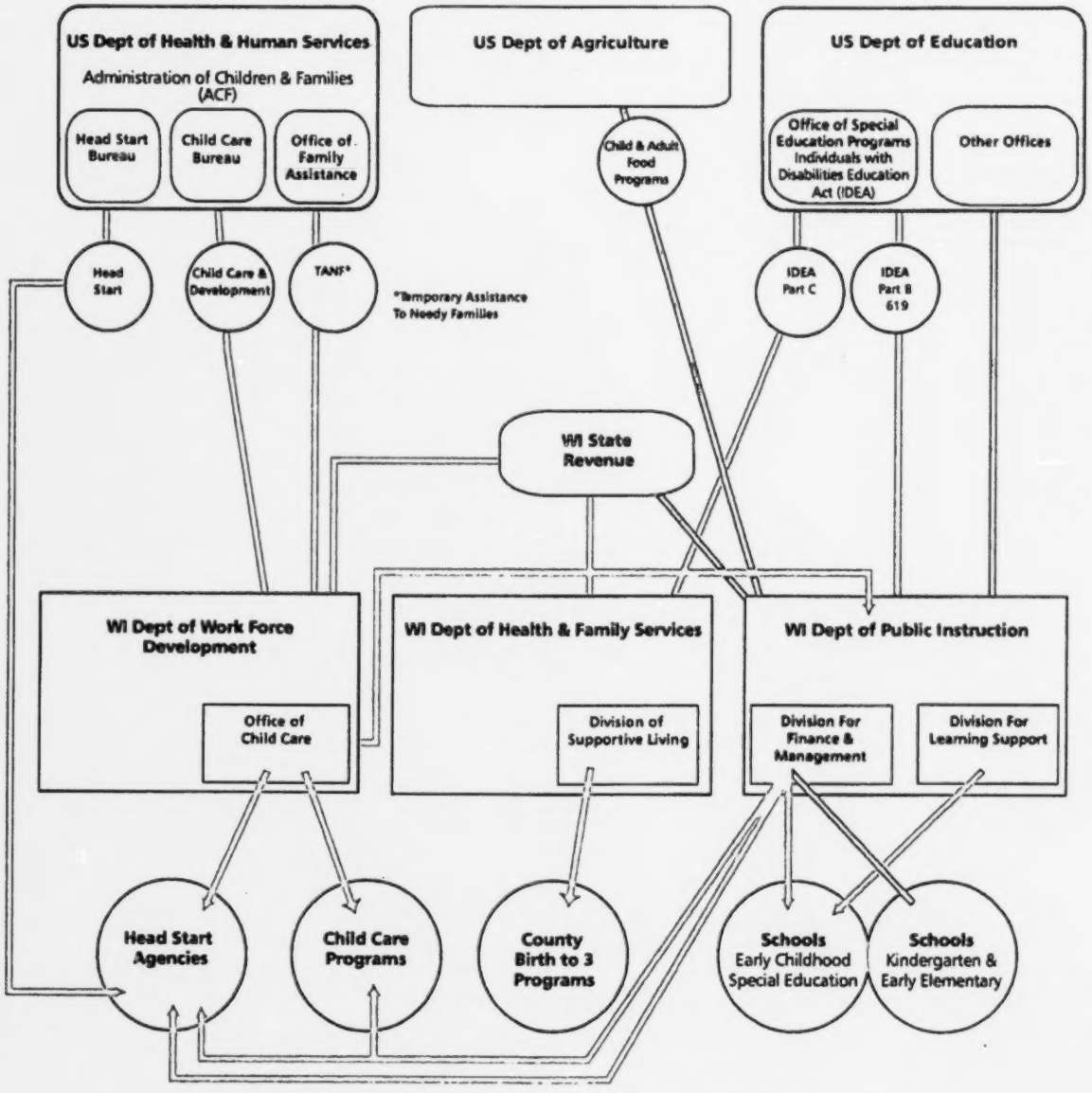
- **P-5:** State funding targeted for several large, high poverty school districts to address the educational needs of economically disadvantaged elementary school students through innovative supplementary educational services.

- **Even Start:** Federal funding targeted to create a new range of services for families by building on existing service delivery systems for adult/child services, early education services, adult literacy, and parent education.

- **Title I:** Federal funding targeted to provide educational support services to the educationally disadvantaged includes basic grant, Part A, and migrant education grants, Part C.

- **21st Century Community Learning Centers:** Federal funding targeted to fund before/after and summer programs for children.

Funding For Public Schools


US Dept of Health & Human Services
Administration of Children & Families (ACF)
Head Start Bureau
Child Care Bureau
Office of Family Assistance
US Dept of Agriculture
Child & Adult Food Programs
US Dept of Education
Office of Special Education Programs Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
Other Offices
Head Start
Child Care & Development
TANF*
*Temporary Assistance To Needy Families
IDEA Part C
IDEA Part B 619
WI State Revenue
WI Dept of Work Force Development
Office of Child Care
WI Dept of Health & Family Services
Division of Supportive Living
WI Dept of Public Instruction
Division For Finance & Management
Division For Learning Support
Head Start Agencies
Child Care Programs
County Birth to 3 Programs
Schools Early Childhood Special Education
Schools Kindergarten & Early Elementary

Funding Streams for Services To Children With Special Needs

In accordance with the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), each county in Wisconsin provides services to infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities and their families. The county administrative agency is mandated to locate, identify, and evaluate children who may be eligible for Birth to 3 early intervention services. Children receive a range of services in natural environments including the home or community-based locations. The services are developed through a Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) process and reflect the concerns and priorities of the family.

Each of the 426 school districts in Wisconsin provide special education services to children with special educational needs in accordance with IDEA. School districts are mandated to locate, identify, and evaluate children who may be eligible for special education and related services. Programs serving children from 3-5 years of age are called Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) programs. Through these programs, children are ensured a free and appropriate public education based on the development of an Individual Education Program (IEP). Services are provided in the least restrictive environment within a range of settings: home, child care, Head Start, kindergarten, early childhood special education, and other community settings. When children are served in general education settings, consultation and support services are available to teachers and other staff.

Eligibility: To receive early intervention services, infants and toddlers must have developmental delays or disabilities as defined in state administrative rules HS 90, WI. Adm. Code. To receive special education services, children must have a disability and need for special education as defined in state statue and rules Ch. 115, WI Stats., PI 11 criteria, Adm. Code.

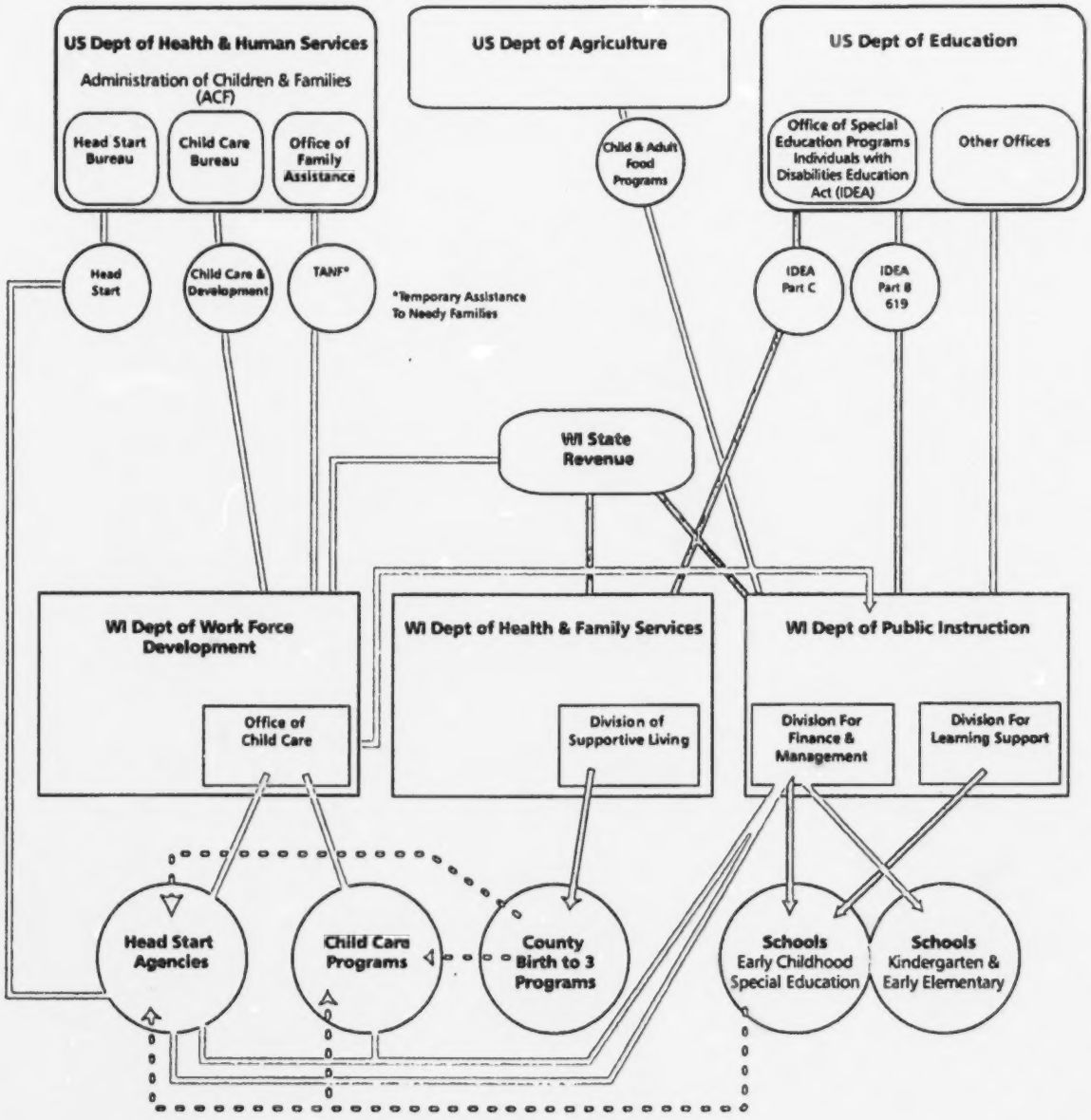
<u>Birth to 3 early intervention program:</u>

- Number of children served in a 12-month period: 9,732
- Funding from federal sources: $6 million
- Funding from state sources: $5 million
- Funding from local sources: $11 million

<u>Special Education for children ages 3 through 5:</u>

- Estimated number of children served in a 12-month period: 14,380
- Funding from federal sources: $9.6 million
- Estimated funding from state sources: $13.7 million
- Estimated funding from local sources: $24.6 million

Funding For Children with Special Needs


US Dept of Health & Human Services
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Child Care Bureau
Office of Family Assistance
US Dept of Agriculture
Child & Adult Food Programs
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WI Dept of Public Instruction
Division For Finance & Management
Division For Learning Support
Head Start Agencies
Child Care Programs
County Birth to 3 Programs
Schools Early Childhood Special Education
Schools Kindergarten & Early Elementary

DASHED LINES: Children with disabilities in Head Start and child care typically receive services (vs. direct funding) from Birth to 3 programs or schools.

V

Wisconsin's Collaborative Vision

Across the nation, more parents are working, putting in longer hours, and finding it increasingly difficult to balance their work and family responsibilities. The number of young children spending time in care outside the home continues to grow steadily, with an alarming percentage of these children placed in programs of questionable quality. Diversity continues to increase, and there continues to be significant disparity in health and developmental outcomes for different racial and ethnic groups. In recent years, these marked changes in the social and economic circumstances under which families with young children are living, combined with significant research in the neurobiological, behavioral, and social sciences have shed new light on the critical importance of quality early childhood education and care. Brain development research and longitudinal studies of early intervention programs point to the critical importance of early life experiences and relationships, at a time when social and economic circumstances exert worrisome pressure on parental ability to meet children's needs alone.

For society to succeed, children must succeed. We must validate the importance of children and the early learning years that are so vital to their future achievement. We must demand and work for care, education, health, nutrition, social services, and family support for all children and their families. We must recognize the need for a comprehensive system in which policy makers, scientists, business and community leaders, early childhood specialists, practitioners, and parents work together to share knowledge and responsibility. We must forge public policy that provides infrastructure for a comprehensive early childhood system, accessible by all families. We must blend funding streams and programs to maximize benefits, avoid gaps in service, and create comprehensive systems. We must orchestrate public policy that supports a skilled, educated, stable, and adequately paid early childhood workforce. Our vision must be collaborative, and we must have a plan for advancing that vision.

"Successful action will require the long-term, collaborative investment of government, professional organizations, voluntary associations, and private philanthropy."

19

WECCP: Working To Build Collaboration

Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (WECCP) is working to build state networks and collaboration, support community-based partnerships, develop new and innovative funding approaches, design professional development opportunities, and explore new ways of serving children and families. WECCP, comprised of state, local, public, and private groups and individuals who have been working together since 1993, is striving to transform early childhood education and care in a blended fashion that is unique and pivotal to the success of children and families served. Individually, each participating partner has an important stake in improving early education and care for the children of Wisconsin, and brings significant knowledge, experience, and resources to the table. The partners have sought out a collaborative alliance with one another because they recognize that their ability to individually provide comprehensive services is limited by discontinuity within the system as a whole. Systemic problems include:

- Fragmented service delivery
- Duplication and gaps in services
- Children currently need to be categorized and labeled
- Children currently are shuttled between programs
- Parents find it difficult to get what is needed at an affordable cost
- Quality services are not always provided

Through cooperation, collaboration, and the sharing of expertise and resources, the partners seek to create a new system that will reach children and families early. Their vision outlines a system through which children may be served without being labeled or sorted by eligibility, disability, and/or income levels. The system will provide access to a sufficient range of developmental services for all children in Wisconsin and insure that quality services are available when and where families need them. It will provide safe and stimulating environments for children, and support affordability for families. In addition, the system will involve seniors and citizens of all ages.

This vision represents the best of what we know about education and care for young children and families, and seeks to create a blended system for both. The WCCEP network connects projects, resources and conferences, empowering members to collectively transform our fragmented system into one that will better serve the children and families of Wisconsin.

Public Policy, Structure, & Family Economics

- Parents are the first and foremost teacher of their children. Parents are partners in the planning and delivery of services for their children.
- Parents need to be supported by strong public policy which provides the infrastructure for families to be economically stable and self-sufficient.
- Comprehensive early childhood services require stable, adequate and equitable financing derived from multiple

sources. New mechanisms must be developed that bridge the gap between what families can afford and the actual cost of quality services. Achieving this goal will require increased investment from all parties - public and private.

- The design and delivery of early childhood services may vary to meet community needs, but should have uniformly adequate and equitable funding to assure quality services for children and families statewide.

- Each community should offer a continuum of quality services for children, which integrate education and care continuing from birth through adolescence, both before children enter school and during the years they are in school.

- For early childhood services to function effectively, and remain responsive to the children, families, and communities they serve, communities must offer a comprehensive system which includes parenting support and education, resource and referral, community planning, and ongoing assessment and evaluation.

- Communities and employers should work together in order to serve the different needs that families have over time; including paid family leave and family friendly workplaces which support families as caregivers.

Equity, Access, & Families As Consumers

- A comprehensive early childhood system should be diverse and encompass a wide variety of service delivery methods including home-based, center-based, and parent-provided arrangements.

- Families should have the opportunity to choose among various options for their child's early childhood services.

- The early childhood system should ensure access and options to all families regardless of their ability to pay.

- Early childhood services should be available to all children, including those with special needs.

- The system should provide opportunities for the socio-economic integration of children and families. Programs should be open to families of all incomes through a variety of methods.

- The system should be integrated and coordinated with other service systems to provide access to the comprehensive services that families need such as health

- Parents and the general public need education and information about quality early childhood services to empower them to be well-informed consumers.

- The system is supported by business and employment practices that provide flexible hours, parental leave, and other pro-family polices.

Quality Services For All Children

- A quality early childhood system should take into consideration a full-range of activities, services and programs for young children and their families including support for parent provided arrangements, parent education, informal community activities, as well as established home-based and center-based programs.

- While quality will be demonstrated in different ways and will look different in different settings, established programs will include:

  - Supported and well-trained caregivers, teachers, and administrators, who are culturally competent;

  - Enough staff to be sensitive and responsive to each child and support each parent;

  - Safe, healthy and age-appropriate physical surroundings;

  - Continuity of relationships;

  - Nutritious meals and health promotion including healthy dietary and lifestyle behaviors; and

  - Culturally and developmentally appropriate learning opportunities.

- Technology should be used in the administration and delivery of services to the maximum benefit of the child, program, and system.

- Government regulation at all levels should serve as a consumer protection mechanism to ensure children's right to health care and developmentally appropriate early childhood services.

- The early childhood system (leadership, staffing, program design, and service delivery) should reflect and respond to the diversity of families, of communities and of this nation.

Professional Development

- Quality early childhood services depend upon a skilled workforce. The early childhood professional development system must:

  - Be based on a comprehensive and coordinated framework of pre-service and continuing education programs on the technical college and university levels;

  - Provide for training for all professional and paraprofessional positions and roles representing all program levels and settings;

  - Provide a career ladder or lattice that facilitates movement between the levels and programs within the field; and

  - Offer accessible and differentiated career development opportunities which result in professional and economic advancement.

- Quality early childhood services depend upon a stable work force. The system supports the quality of its services by attracting, retaining, and rewarding its work force through:
    - Offering adequate compensation which recognizes and rewards training and education;
    - Ensuring the provision of health and other benefits such as retirement and decent working conditions; and
    - Providing effective supervision, evaluation, and mentorship.
- The early childhood system must have effective strategies for promoting leadership development at every level through professional associations, in work force preparation and continuing professional development programs and by a variety of other mechanisms throughout the system.

Blend \'blend\ vb **blend-ed; blending**

1: to mix allied particles together smoothly and inseparably, 2 :to combine into an integrated whole.

VI

Building Success: Work In Progress

Across the nation, early childhood education and care funding streams are fragmented in terms of federal funding, guidelines, and eligibility criteria. This has created multiple systems in which the service delivery approaches face severe challenges as they struggle to meet the needs of the families and young children they are designed to serve. In response to this and to a changing society, communities across the country are working to find new and better ways of providing services. In Wisconsin, we are making significant progress toward the development and implementation of a better early childhood education and care system for all children and families.

As leaders in the process, Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (WECCP) maintains a collaborative membership of state and local public and private groups and individuals who have been working together since 1993. The broad membership base provides the group with unique oversight and strategic insight into the problems at hand. Partnership and communication within WECCP facilitates the identification of programs that represent the "best of the best" within the current system, as well as deficiencies and gaps in service. This in turn facilitates the creation of more comprehensive and effective "links" in services for children and families.

WECCP efforts represent a distinct philosophical shift away from guarded independence on the part of individual agencies toward collaborative work for systemic success. The joint focus of WECCP sets the stage for a positive restructuring of existent networks, the development of new connections between programs, and the creation of new, collaborative efforts. The ultimate goal is always that of better serving our state's youngest constituents and their families.

As WECCP continues to work toward a state blended system of early childhood education and care, there is much positive news to share. Ongoing efforts continue to focus on the creation of a system that will permit every child and family access to a high quality, comprehensive early childhood services. This section will focus on a variety of efforts and resources that are available through WECCP and their partners to assist early childhood programs throughout Wisconsin work toward the vision of improved and blended services. The success-building efforts highlighted are divided into five major areas of development: *Community Development*, *Professional Development*, *Leadership development*, *Service Delivery*, and *Network Development*.

Locally Matched Child Care & Development Grants

The Department of Workforce Development partnered with the Departments of Public Instruction and Health and Family Services to encourage local community programs to develop collaborative efforts to improve services for children and families. Agencies that received grants are located in over 60 counties and include County Health and Human Services, Tribal programs, UW Extension, technical colleges, and school districts.

The strategy utilized by the Department of Workforce Development in distributing the funds is an innovative means of encouraging local community partnerships for the benefit of early childhood education and care. Utilization of the funds is unique based on the needs and interests of each applicant, community, and agency. Examples include:

- Milwaukee Public Schools and the Early Childhood Council worked collaboratively to launch a public awareness campaign to promote accreditation for meeting high quality standards, and to improve child care quality through training, technical assistance, and salary enhancement.

- Wood County worked with the Child Care Resource and Referral of Central Wisconsin to increase public awareness of the importance of quality child care and to create a Child Care Health Specialist position to promote optimal health in child care programs.

- The City of Merrill Public Library received money to improve services to child care providers. They used the money to buy materials, establish a rotating collection of books for use by child care providers and establish an itinerant story teller position.

Child Care Guidelines

WECCP efforts contributed to the development of new guidelines for collaborative programs where at least one of the collaborators is a licensed child care program. These guidelines are incorporated with comments into the Group Day Care Manual, HFS 46. New provisions include an illustrative list of some of the types of programs that may develop:

- An identified self-contained room or area is occupied by two different licensed day care programs during different times of the day.

- Two or more licensed day care facilities are located in the same building. The programs are operated independently of each other and each utilizes space that is separate from the other program.

Contact: DHFS, Anne Carmody
262-267-9761

Inclusive Child Care

In an ongoing effort to promote inclusive child care (the inclusion of children with special needs in a child care environments) WECCP successfully promoted state-level adoption of the campaign "Together — Children Grow."

"Together — Children Grow" educational materials offer child care providers, parents and the general public information about a wide range of issues related to children with special needs and child care: legal parameters of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), concerns of parents and child care providers, and resources for successful inclusion. As part of the state-level campaign, resources that are available include an informational booklet, brochures and a traveling table-top display.

Contact: Child Care Information Center
1-800-362-7353

THINK BIG. Start Small.

Through efforts largely orchestrated by WECCP, agencies and organizations invested in quality early childhood education and care joined together to produce and launch the statewide public awareness campaign, "THINK BIG. START SMALL".

Through a variety of materials — brochures, flyers, billboards, newspaper inserts, a 30-second television commercial, and a series of radio spots — the campaign successfully communicated vital messages about the critical importance of quality early childhood education and care for all children:

- Learning begins at birth.
- Over 70% of young children spend time in early education and care outside their home.
- Caregivers trained in early education are critical to building young minds.
- The opportunities we provide to all children today will shape who they become tomorrow.

Contact: Wisconsin Child Care Resource & Referral
1-888-713-KIDS (5437)

Building Success: Professional Development

Articulation Agreement

On April 6, 2000, the Wisconsin Technical College System and the University of Wisconsin System boards signed and adopted the *Statement of Guiding Principles on Student Transfer*. Among the specific actions taken by the Board of Regents to facilitate credit transfer opportunities in Wisconsin was the decision to create more baccalaureate degree completion programs in areas with course content alignment, starting with pilot agreements in Nursing and Early Childhood Education. This agreement marked a significant step toward the ultimate goal of a seamless system of secondary and post-secondary options for early childhood education and care professionals in Wisconsin.

R.E.W.A.R.D. Wisconsin.

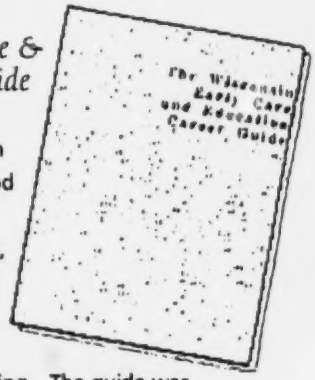
The R.E.W.A.R.D. Wisconsin Stipend Program (Rewarding Education with Wages and Respect for Dedication) is a compensation initiative that provides stipends directly to teachers, providers, and directors based upon their current level on The Registry Career Ladder. The goal of this initiative is to retain those early childhood education and care staff who have already attained education specific to early childhood. In this first pilot year, stipends will be provided to individuals who are on levels five through ten of the Registry. The vision of this program is to expand funding such that stipends would be available annually to professionals working in early childhood at all levels.

T.E.A.C.H.®

A broad-based statewide advisory committee continues to meet to assist in making recommendations regarding T.E.A.C.H.® Early Childhood Wisconsin. Based on a $4.3 million increase approved in July 2000 by the Wisconsin legislature, this scholarship program has expanded to include scholarships in the following areas:

- Infant and Toddler Credential
- Administrator Credential
- Statewide Child Care Mentoring
- Eight or Nine Credit Option

Wisconsin Early Care & Education Career Guide



This guide provides an overview of early childhood career opportunities, a summary of key resources, definition of common terms, and a framework for individualized professional development planning. The guide was published in March 2001 through the collaborative efforts of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Department of Health and Family Services, CESA 5, Planning Council for Health and Human Services, Inc., Head Start State Collaboration Project, and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.

Contact: Wisconsin Child Care Information Center
1-800-362-7353
www.collaboratingpartners.com

Building Success: Leadership Development

National Governor's Association Grant

The Wisconsin application for the national Governor's Association Grant, ***Building Public and Political Will for Early Childhood Care and Education***, was written and submitted by the Department of Workforce Development in collaboration with the ongoing efforts of WECCP. The NGA grant was intended to support and build on specific goals outlined by the WECCP Action Plan. Important NGA objectives include:

- Improve family access to blended quality early childhood care and education services;
- Develop a state-level infrastructure to guide and enhance state policies regarding early learning for children and strengthening their families;
- Develop a seamless education system to prepare staff that care and can educate children from birth to age 8;
- Increase the number and visibility of high quality and accredited early learning programs statewide; and
- Increase general awareness of state government, business leaders, civic groups, and the general public to the importance of early childhood education and care.

The NGA team advocated for the creation of a Children's Cabinet and supporting advisory committee. The Cabinet would ensure effective use of funds, coordinate state policy, and promote administrative flexibility, rule reduction, and systems reform. The advisory committee would provide for two-way communication between the Cabinet, the state agency, and the broad early childhood community.

Contact: Lisa Hardt, Policy Analysis
Governor Scott McCallum's Office
608-266-1212
lisa.hardt@gov.state.wi.us

Strongest Links

The collaboratively sponsored annual conference, ***Strongest Links***, is designed to bring together leaders in policy design and implementation, professional development, and early childhood programs. The conference has helped shape the development of the WECCP Action Plan by defining priorities, supporting the development of the statewide public awareness campaign, and highlighting strategies to inform and impact public policy.

Contact: The Wisconsin Head Start Association
608-265-9422

Building Success: Service Delivery

WECCP Program/Service Indicators

WECCP has developed a set of Program/Service indicators to help communities blend programs serving young children. Designed to help improve service delivery approaches and to guide in the development of quality early childhood education and care, indicators include:

Collaborative Planning

- A broad base of stakeholders have come together to find common ground, determine assets, and develop a "blended" approach for community supports.

Funding

- Different funding streams are utilized to support the facility such as: education (kindergarten aids, special education, Title I part A or B), Head Start, child care, and health.
- Program and community resources are shared among programs.

Facilities

- Several programs are housed in one facility; such as child care, Head Start, public school, disability services, parent education and support, family resource, health care, or social services.
- The facility supports children with appropriate environments.
- The facility supports parents with a parent room and/or resource center.

Program/Services

- Children are in similar classrooms, not classrooms segregated by program type, family income, or child's ability/disability.
- The curriculum follows developmentally appropriate practices which are responsive to child's learning style, age, ability/disability and cultural/family values.
- Facility/service is available a minimum of nine hours a day.
- Facility/service is available at least 45 weeks a year.
- Children's goals, objectives, outcomes are jointly planned.
- Support services exist to meet the individual needs of children such as disability services.
- Access exists to health care services such as WIC clinics, immunizations, etc. A family-centered philosophy offers partnerships with parents in all phases.
- A range of services are available which support families in their parenting and working roles such as parent education, family literacy, and adult education.

Community Based

- Center serves as a neighborhood hub making connections/referrals to other providers and the community at large to ensure access to comprehensive supports for the child and family.

Staffing Pattern

- Staffing patterns support low adult-child ratio and team teaching.
- Staff development supports career ladders and professional development.

Shared Governance

- Shares responsibility among families, providers, the public sector, and the private sector.
- Staff and families play an important role in deciding how funds are spent and how programs operate.

Accountability

- Accountability is results based.
- There is ongoing evaluation/assessment by all stakeholders.

The desire to collaborate for the benefit of children with partner agencies in Wisconsin communities is strong, and it becomes a shared responsibility: to offer community support to all families in their roles as parents, support the economic opportunities and self-sufficiency of families, offer quality services to children.

Many organizations in Wisconsin have taken major steps toward the redesign and transformation from separate early education systems to a quality, comprehensive early childhood system. Some of these include:

- Milwaukee Early Childhood Council
- Lapham School Itinerant Teacher Program
- Child Development Incorporated
- Wautoma Center
- Guadalupe Head Start

Their stories are inspiring and motivating. More information about these successful programs, and others like them, may be found on the Collaborating Partners website:
www.collaboratingpartners.com/highlights.html

For additional information about Program Service Indicators:
www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlcl/bbfcsp/ecindopg.html

Regional Networks

Within Wisconsin, five early childhood Regional Networks provide new opportunities to interact and discover continuing development. The Networks exist to:

- Provide support for those working to blend programs and/or funding streams.
- Promote networking and sharing around early childhood partnerships.
- Provide arenas to envision/create new approaches that support young children and families.
- Enhance cross-program and cross-department efforts at the state and local level.
- Provide mechanisms for "collaborator collaboration."
- Provide a community based mechanism for WECCP.
- Facilitate communication between local, regional, and state levels.

Regional Networks work toward these goals by engaging in a variety of activities:

- Create Communication Networks: Map the local, regional, and state-level communication networks that keep you informed. Discuss ways to strengthen these networks.
- Collaborate: Showcase partnerships working together at the local level to align different funding streams. Submit descriptions for website.
- Create Strong Teams: Introduction, get acquainted, team building activities. Identify the teams that currently exist in the region. Share experiences or bring in leadership to begin building formal teams, partnership groups, or coordinating councils.
- Continuously Learn: Select from several presentations that can be given by state consultants including brain development, expansion of 4-year-old kindergarten, serving children with disabilities in community settings, consultant panel discussion on your topic, or small group "barrier busting" with individual state consultants.
- Create Community: Discuss regional or local issues and envision different approaches to building community supports for young children and families.

Sharing Success: Network Development

- Cultivate Change: State consultant facilitation, or exercises, videos, or discussion on leadership, system change, transcending collaboration, creating new vision, or beginning the "Journey Upstream."

- Create Continuity: Plan for future meetings or activities.

The regional networks are just beginning to communicate through a new website. To obtain more information, visit:
www.collaboratingpartners.com/regional

Quarterly Meetings

WECCP holds regular meetings to engage in ongoing planning, share resources and information, and plan for future events and collaborations. Each meeting includes content sessions and organizational activities in focus areas.

Contact: Jill Haglund
608-267-9625
jill.haglund@dpi.state.wi.us

WECCP Listserv

The WECCP listserv is designed to facilitate interactive, electronic communication between the agencies, associations, and individuals providing services to Wisconsin's young children (birth to age 8) and their families. The focus of this listserv is on state, community, and interagency efforts to improve service delivery approaches for young children and their families. Individuals may subscribe to the WECCP listserv by email request to:

- majordomo@badger.state.wi.us
- Subject line: leave blank
- In body of message, enter: *subscribe weccp* (do not enter your name or any other information in the message)

Contact: Jill Haglund
608-267-9625
www.collaboratingpartners.com
www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlcl/bbfcsp/eclistsv.html

VII

Opportunities For Action

Across the nation, there is widespread recognition that it takes the involvement of many different stakeholders to make changes in the current approaches to early childhood education and care. In Wisconsin, there is also a growing awareness of the need for the different stakeholders to work together. Our efforts and awareness are just beginning and our future is bright. Government, associations, programs, business leaders, civic groups, philanthropic groups, higher education, and parents will play an important role in making the transformation.

Previous sections of this document highlight WECCP actions and resources. This section suggests additional opportunities for involvement in promoting the vision. We encourage you to work with us to improve the lives of our state's young children and their families.

Government (Legislature, Governor's Office, & State Departments)

- Create a state-level, interdepartmental structure, such as a Children's Cabinet, to be responsible for the development of common vision for a children's agenda, methods to ensure stable long-term funding mechanisms, and consistent interdepartment outcomes and/or grant priorities.

- Create formal mechanisms to insure two-way communication between the Children's Cabinet, all stakeholders (related committees, councils, or advisory committees, statewide associations, business, civic groups, and local communities) in the development of a common children's agenda and strategies for implementing the vision.

- Support interagency mechanisms that allow communities to maximize funding and blend service delivery approaches through joint strategic planning and assessment of community strengths and opportunities.

- Promote standards in all education and care programs that lead to high quality programs and promote positive outcomes that include health, education, inclusion of children with special needs, parent education and resources, social services, and professional development.

continued

- Explore current state data systems related to early childhood education and care to determine existing data, common data elements, and data that may be needed in order to collect information/outcomes related to children and families in Wisconsin and the impact of programs and services that support them.

- Work through the PK-16 Council on professional development to explore ways to continue the development of a common career ladder, compensation systems, and articulated higher education approaches for those that educate and care for young children, including teachers, health consultants, therapists, program managers, and family service workers.

- Work with the new state teacher licensing redesign to create a seamless licensing approach that supports teachers in a wide range of programs including child care, Head Start, and Birth to 3 programs.

- Endorse and utilize WECCP state and regional meetings, activities, and listserv to share information, network, and promote best practices.

Early Childhood Education & Care and Related Associations

- Support efforts to create a state-level interdepartmental infrastructure, such as a Children's Cabinet with advisory committees, and other mechanisms to develop a common vision for a children's agenda.

- Promote standards in all education and care programs that lead to high quality programs and promote positive outcomes that include health, education, inclusion of children with special needs, parent education and resources, social services, and professional development.

- Contact the Child Care Resource and Referral Network or others in the campaign management team to find ways you can expand, support, or promote the "Think Big. Start Small." public awareness campaign.

- Endorse and utilize WECCP state and regional meetings, activities, listserv, and your communication networks to share information, network, and promote best practices.

Communities and Existing Early Childhood Programs

- Establish and participate in interagency planning efforts, such as early childhood councils, to create a community vision and community-wide approaches to the delivery of services and supports for young children and their families.

- Work in partnership with other programs to maximize funding and blend current service delivery systems.

- Endorse and participate in WECCP state and regional meetings, activities and join the listserv to envision and create new approaches for providing services to young children and their families.

Business/Civic/Philanthropic

- Learn more about early childhood education and care in your community.
- Contact your local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency to find out how you can support and promote the "Think Big. Start Small." campaign.
- Create a partnership with a local early childhood program by offering time, expertise, resources, and/or financial support.
- Provide employees with release time to visit or participate in their own or other children's program.
- Work for a range of benefits that support employee's families.
- Show support for individuals who care and educate young children.
- Become leaders, speak out on behalf of all young children and their families.

Technical Colleges, Universities, and Technical Assistance Providers

- Continue efforts to develop articulation agreements between technical colleges and universities to create a seamless transfer of credits between systems and support the sense of a common profession.
- Promote the importance of quality early childhood courses and degree programs.
- Continue the consolidation of early childhood and early childhood special education programs at the university level.
- Explore mechanisms for technical assistance providers to partner in the delivery of training and technical assistance approaches.
- Develop a mechanism to provide easy access to information on the range of continuing education and inservice opportunities available related to the care and education of young children and their families.
- Participate in WECCP professional development events such as "Intersecting Interests" forums and network through the listserv.

Parents/Family Members

- Recognize that each child is born ready to learn, and the important role you play in your child's development.
- Provide healthy food and a safe, secure environment in which your children may grow, learn, and explore.
- Take an active role in your child's early childhood education and care programs.
- Seek out resources or support, if you have concerns about your child's development or want help to enhance your parenting skills.
- Speak out on behalf of young children and families.

VIII

Appendix A: References

References

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Appendix B: List of Endorsing Partners

Local Level Partners

CESA 11 Head Start
Child Care Connection- Wausau
Child Care Resource and Referral: Appleton & Hayward
Community Coordinated Child Care, Inc.
Early Childhood Council of Milwaukee
Encompass Child Care, Inc.
Fond du Lac Council for Nurturing Families
Kenosha County Early Childhood Consortium
Langlade Preschool Interagency Committee
Lomira School District, Theresa Elementary
Marathon County Birth to Six Council
Merrill Little Learners' Head Start/EEN Program
Milwaukee Center For Independence
Milwaukee 4 C's
Milwaukee County Child Care Advisory Committee
Plymouth Every Child Coordinating Council, Inc.
Schreiber Foods, Inc.
Unified School District of Antigo
United Cerebral Palsy-Extended Day Care
Verona Early Childhood Family Education Council
Watertown Unified School District
Waukesha County Project Head Start/Learning Plus
Wausau - Child Care Connection

State Level Partners

CEC - WI Division for Early Childhood
Children's Service Society of WI
Parents Plus of WI
Portage Project
Right From the Start
UW Extension
Waisman Center Early Intervention Program
WI Child Care Improvement Project
WI Child Care Resource And Referral Network
Wisconsin Child Care Union
WI Council on Children & Families, Inc.
WI Council on Developmental Disabilities
WI Department of Health and Family
WI Department of Public Instruction
WI Department of Workforce Development
WI Head Start Association
Wisconsin Early Childhood Association
WI Education Association Council
WI Family Child Care Association
WI Family Literacy Initiative
Wisconsin Technical College System
WI Women's Network Child Care Task Force

In addition to the Endorsing Partners, the WECCP mailing list includes 55 other participating agencies and 36 other interested agencies.

WECCP Endorsement

Join Us To Support Our Vision
For Blended Early Education & Care

Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (WECCP) represents many public and private agencies, associations, and individuals that care about our state's young children and their families. The Collaborating Partners have come together to promote the blending of our state's current separate early childhood education and care systems. We want to develop a quality, comprehensive early childhood system which shares responsibility among families, providers, the public sector, and the private sector. This network is seeking endorsement of their vision, philosophy, and principles as described in Section II of this publication. Join Wisconsin's Early Childhood Collaborating Partners by indicating your level of commitment to this effort.

We want to participate with Wisconsin's Early Childhood Collaborating Partners in the following way:

(Check One)

- ☐ We endorse the established goal, philosophy, and principles. We want to be listed as an endorsing partner and our representative(s) will participate in meetings and activities.

- ☐ At this time, we are withholding full endorsement of the goal, philosophy, and principles. However, we are interested in blending of early childhood education and care and we may attend meetings or participate in activities.

Agency/Association Name: _____

Authorizing Individual's Signature: _____

Contact Representative to the Collaborating Partners: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Photocopy and return to:

Jill Haglund, P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841 (fax: 608-266-2529)
or Mary Babula, 744 Williamson Street, Suite 200, Madison, WI 53703 (fax: 608-240-9890)

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